The Connected Educator: Learning and Leading in a Digital Age

Author(s): Sheryl Nussbaum-Beach, Lani Rutter Hall

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Summary:
In *The Connected Educator*, authors Sheryl Nussbaum-Beach and Lani Ritter Hall integrate professional development that is currently working in schools with a new model: connected learning communities. Connected learning communities are a three-pronged approach to effective professional development using the local (professional learning community), contextual (personal learning network) and global (community of practice) environments. Connected learners take responsibility for their own professional development. They figure out what they need to learn and then collaborate with others to construct the knowledge they need. Instead of waiting for professional learning to be organised and delivered to them, connected learners contribute, interact, share ideas and reflect.

The book draws heavily on the authors’ experience as members and leaders of connected learning communities. This model shifts the locus of control to each reader – the connected learner – rather than vesting it in outsiders, higher-ups and professional development consultants. The intent is to help each educator, as well as the partners, parents and policymakers who support them, to improve learning and teaching in and beyond the classroom walls.

Chapter 1 sets the stage for understanding what it is to be a connected learner. Chapter 2 makes a case for connected learning in communities. Chapter 3 explores the importance of being a learner first, educator second. Chapter 4 looks at developing a collaborative culture and a mindset that supports connected learning. Chapter 5 invites readers to explore free and affordable technologies and virtual environments that support collaborative learning. Chapter 6 guides readers through the steps of implementing a connected learning community. Chapter 7 examines how to sustain the momentum of professional learning using scale as a strategy for co-creating and improving a learning community. Chapter 8 focuses on the leadership system: school and teacher leadership in a distributive model. Finally, Chapter 9 looks at what the future holds for the connected learner and what being a connected learner means for each reader.

Related Resources:
- The Digital Briefcase for Administrators (IST9690)
- Essentials for Principals: Mobile Learning Devices (SOT2295)
- Considerations for Technology and Teachers (IST9683)
- Living on the Future Edge (TCF8167)
- Creating a Digital-Rich Classroom (IST9683)